



C A T O.⁴

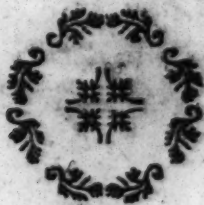
A

TRAGEDY.

By Mr. ADDISON.

Ecce Spectaculum dignum, ad quod respiciat, intentus
operi suo, Deus! Ecce par Deo dignum, vir fortis
cum malâ fortunâ compositus! Non video, inquam,
quid habeat in terris Jupiter pulchrius, si convertere
animum velit, quàm ut spectet Catonem, jam parti-
bus non semel fractis, nihilominus inter ruinas
publicas erectum.

SEN. de Divin. Pœ



L O N D O N :

Printed for W. CAVELL, HOLBORN, 1774; who
may be had the full Value for Libraries or Parcel
of Books.

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PROLOGUE,

Written by Mr. P O P E.

Spoken by Mr. W I L K S.

TO wake the soul by tender strokes of art,
To raise the Genius, and to mend the heart,
To make mankind in conscious virtue bold,
Live o'er each scene and be what they behold:
For this the tragie Muse first trod the stage,
Commanding tears to stream through every age;
Tyrants no more their savage nature kept,
And foes to virtue wonder'd how they wept.
Our author shuns by vulgar springs to move
The hero's glory or the virgin's love;
In pitying love we but our weakness shew,
And wild ambition well deserves its woe.
Here tears shall flow from a more gen'rous cause,
Such tears as patriots shed for dying laws:
He bids your breasts with ancient ardour rise,
And calls forth Roman drops from British eyes.
Virtue confess'd in human shape he draws,
What Plato thought, and God-like Cato was:
No common object to your sight displays,
But what with pleasure Heav'n itself surveys;
A brave man struggling in the storms of fate,
And greatly falling with a falling state!
While Cato gives his little senate laws,
What bosom beats not in his country's cause?
Who sees him act, but envies ev'ry deed?
Who hears him groan, and does not wish to bleed?
Ev'n when proud Cæsar 'midst triumphal cars,
The spoils of nations, and the pomp of wars,
Ignobly vain, and impotently great,
Shew'd Rome her Cato's figure drawn in state,
As her dead Father's rev'rend image past,
The pomp was darken'd and the Day o'ercast,
The triumph ceas'd—Tears gush'd from ev'ry eye,
The world's great victor pass'd unheeded by;
Her last good man dejected Rome ador'd,
And honour'd Cæsar's less than Cato's sword.

Britons

P R O L O G U E

*Britons attend: Be worth like this approv'd,
And shew you have the virtue to be mov'd.
With honest scorn the first fam'd Cato view'd
Rome learning arts from Greece, whom she subdu'd:
Our scene precariously subsists too long
On French translation and Italian song:
Dare to have sense yourselves; assert the stage,
Be justly warm'd with your own Native rage.
Such plays alone should please a British ear,
As Cato's self had not disdain'd to hear.*

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

CATO,		Mr. Booth.
Lucius,	} Senators.	Mr. Keen.
Sempronius.		Mr. Mills.
Juba, Prince of Numidia.		Mr. Wilks.
Syphax, General of the Numidians.		Mr. Cibber.
Portius,	} Sons of Cato.	Mr. Powell.
Marcus,		Mr. Ryan.
Decius, Ambassador from Cæsar.		Mr. Bowman.

Mutineers, Guards, &c.

W O M E N.

Marcia, Daughter to Cato.	Mrs. Oldfield.
Lucia, Daughter to Lucius	Mrs. Porter.

SCENE, A large Hall in the Governor's
Palace of Utica.



C A T O.

A C T I. S C E N E. I.

P O R T I U S, M A R C U S.

P O R T I U S.

THE dawn is over-cast, the morning low'rs
And heavily in clouds brings on the day ;
The great, th'important day, big with the fate
Of Cato and of Rome——our father's death
Would fill up all the guilt of civil war,
And close the scene of blood. Already Cæsar
Has ravag'd more than half the globe, and sees
Mankind grown thin by his destructive sword :
Should he go further, numbers would be wanting
To form new battles, and support his crimes.
Ye Gods, what havock does ambition make
Among your works !

Marc. Thy steady temper, Portius,
Can look on guilt, rebellion, fraud and Cæsar,
In the calm lights of mild philosophy ;
I'm tortur'd ev'n to madness, when I think
On the proud victor : ev'ry time he's nam'd
Pharsalia rises to my view ! —— I see
Th' insulting tyrant prancing o'er the field
Strow'd with Rome's citizens, and drench'd in slaughter,
His horse's hoofs wet with Patrician blood !
Oh, Portius, is there not some chosen curse,
Some hidden thunder in the stores of Heav'n,
Red with uncommon wrath, to blast the man

Who

Who owes his greatness to his country's ruin;

Por. Believe me, Marcus, 'tis an impious greatness,
And mix'd with too much horror, to be envy'd:
How does the lustre of our father's actions,
Through the dark cloud of ills that cover him,
Break out, and burn with more triumphant brightness!
His suff'rings shine, and spread a glory round him;
Greatly unfortunate, he fights the cause
Of honour, virtue, liberty, and Rome,
His sword ne'er fell but on the guilty head:
Oppression, tyranny, and pow'r usurp'd,
Draw all the Vengeance of his arm upon 'em.

Marc. Who knows not this? But what can Cato do
Against a world, a base degen'rate world,
That court the yoke, and bows the neck to Cæsar;
Pent up in Utica he vainly forms
A poor epitome of Roman greatness,
And cover'd with Numidian guards, directs
A feeble army, and an empty senate,
Remnants of mighty battles fought in vain.
By Heav'ns, such virtues, join'd with such success,
Distract my very soul: our father's fortune
Wou'd almost tempt us to renounce his precepts.

Por. Remember what our Father oft has told us:
The ways of heav'n are dark and intricate;
Puzzled in mazes, and perplex'd with errors,
Our understanding traces 'em in vain.
Lost and bewilder'd in the fruitless search;
Nor sees with how much art the windings run,
Nor where the regular confusion ends.

Marc. These are suggestions of a mind at ease:
Oh, Portius, didst thou taste but half the griefs
That wring my soul, thou could'st not talk thus coldly,
Passion unpity'd, and successful love,
Plant daggers in my heart, and aggravate
My other griefs. Were but my Lucia kind! —

Tor. Thou seest not that thy brother is thy rival:
But I must hide it, for I know thy temper, [*Aside.*
Now, Marcus, now, thy virtue's on the proof:
Put forth thy utmost strength, work ev'ry nerve,
And call up all thy father in thy soul:

To

To quell the tyrant love, and guard thy heart
On his weak side, where most our nature fails,
Would be a conquest worthy Cato's son.

Marc. Portius, the counsel which I cannot not take,
Instead of healing, but upbraids my weakness.
Bid me for honour plunge into a war
Of thickest foes, and rush on certain death,
Then shalt thou see that Marcus is not slow
To follow glory, and confess his father.
Love is not to be reason'd down, or lost
In high ambition, and a thirst of greatness;
'Tis second life, it grows into the soul,
Warms ev'ry vein, and beats in ev'ry pulse,
I feel it here: my resolution melts——

Por. Behold young Juba, the Numidian prince!
With how much care he forms himself to glory,
And breaks the fierceness of his native temper,
To copy out our father's bright example.
He loves our sister Marcia, greatly loves her,
His eyes, his looks, his actions all betray it;
But still the smother'd fondness burns within him;
When most it swells, and labours for a vent,
The sense of honour and desire of fame
Drive the big passion back into his heart.
What! shall an African, shall Juba's heir
Reproach great Cato's son, and shew the world
A virtue wanting in a Roman soul?

Marc. Portius, no more! your words leave stings
behind 'em.

When-e'er did Juba, or did Portius, shew
A virtue that has cast me at a distance,
And thrown me out in the Pursuits of honour!

Por. Marcus, I know thy gen'rous temper well;
Fling but th' appearance of dishonour on it,
It straight takes fire, and mounts into a blaze.

Marc. A brother's sufferings claim a brother's pity.

Por. Heav'n knows I pity thee: behold my eyes
Ev'n whilst I speak—do they not swim in tears?

Were but my heart as naked to thy view,
Marcus would see it bleed in his behalf.

Marc. Why then dost treat me with rebukes, instead
Of

Of kind condoling cares, and friendly sorrow!

Por. O Marcus, did I know the way to ease
Thy troubled heart, and mitigate thy pains,
Marcus, believe me, I could die to do it.

Marc. Thou best of brothers, and thou best of
friends!

Pardon a weak distemper'd soul, that swells
With sudden gusts, and sinks as soon in calms,
The sport of passions:—but Sempronius comes:
He must not find this softness hanging on me. [*Exit.*]

S C E N E II.

Enter SEMPRONIUS.

SEMPRONIUS.

Conspiracies no sooner shou'd be form'd
Than executed. What means Portius here?
I like not that cold youth. I must dissemble,
And speak a language foreign to my heart. [*Aside.*]

SEMPRONIUS, PORTIUS.

Good-morrow, Portius! let us once embrace,
Once more embrace: whilst yet we both are free.
To-morrow shou'd we thus express our friendship,
Each might receive a slave into his arms.
This sun perhaps, this morning sun's the last,
That e'er shall rise on Roman liberty.

Por. My father has this morning call'd together
To this poor hall, his little Roman senate,
(The leavings of Pharsalia) to consult
If yet he can oppose the mighty torrent
That bears down Rome, and all her Gods before it;
Or must at length give up the world to Cæsar.

Semp. Not all the pomp and majesty of Rome:
Can raise her senate more than Cato's presence.
His virtues render our assembly awful,
They strike with something like religious fear,
And make ev'n Cæsar tremble at the head
Of armies flush'd with conquest. O, my Portius,
Could I but call that wond'rous man my father,

Wou'd

Wou'd but thy sister Marcia be propitious
To thy friends vows, I might be blest indeed!

Por. Alas! Sempronius, wou'dst thou talk of love
To Marcia, whilst her father's life's in danger;
Thou might'st as well court the pale trembling vestal,
When she beholds the holy flame expiring.

Semp. The more I see the wonders of thy race,
The more I'm charm'd. Thou must take heed, my
Portius!

The world has all its eyes on Cato's son.
Thy father's merit sets thee up to view,
And shews thee in the fairest point of light,
To make thy virtues, or thy faults, conspicuous.

Por. Well dost thou seem to check my ling'ring here
On this important hour—I'll strait away,
And while the fathers of the senate meet
In close debate to weigh th' events of war,
I'll animate the soldiers drooping courage,
With love of freedom, and contempt of life;
I'll thunder in their ears their country's cause,
And try to rouse up all that's Roman in 'em,
'Tis not in mortals to command success;
But we'll do more, Sempronius, we'll deserve it. [*Exit.*]

SEMPRONIUS, *solus.*

Curse on the stripling! how he apes his fire?
Ambitiously sententious—But I wonder
Old Syphax comes not; his Numidian genius
Is well disposed to mischief, were he prompt,
And eager on it; but he must be spur'd,
And ev'ry moment quickned to the course.
—Cato has us'd me ill: he has refus'd
His daughter Marcia to my ardent vows.
Besides: His baffled arms and ruin'd cause
Are bars to my ambition. Cæsar's favour,
That show'rs down greatness on his friends, will raise
To Rome's first honours. If I give up Cato, [me
I claim in my reward his captive daughter.
But Syphax comes! ———

S C E N E

S C E N E III.

SYPHAX, SEMPRONIUS.

SYPHAX.

Sempronius, all is ready.

I've founded my Numidians, man by man,
And find them ripe for a revolt : they all
Complain aloud of Cato's discipline,
And wait but the command to change their master.

Semp. Believe me, Syphax, there's no time to waste;
Ev'n whilst we speak our conqueror comes on,
And gathers ground upon us ev'ry moment.
Alas ! thou knowst not Cæsar's active soul,
With what a dreadful course he rushes on
From war to war ! In vain has nature form'd
Mountains and oceans to oppose his passage ;
He bounds o'er all, victorious in his march :
The Alps and Pyreneans sink before him,
Thro' winds and waves, and storms he works his
way,

Impatient for the battle ; one day more
Will set the victor thund'ring at our gates.
But tell me, hast thou yet drawn o'er young Juba ?
That still would recommend thee more to Cæsar,
And challenge better terms.

Syph. Alas ! he's lost.

He's lost, Sempronius : all his thoughts are full
Of Cato's virtues—But I'll try once more,
(For every instant I expect him here)
If yet I can subdue those stubborn principles
Of faith, of honour, and I know not what,
That have corrupted his Numidian temper,
And struck th' infection into all his soul.

Semp. Be sure to press upon him ev'ry motive.
Juba's surrender, since his father's death,
Would give up Africa into Cæsar's hands,
And make him lord of half the burning zone.

Syph. But is it true, Sempronius, that your senate
Is call'd together ? Gods ! thou must be cautious !

Cato

Cato has piercing eyes, and will discern
Our frauds, unless they're cover'd thick with art.

Semp. Let me alone, good Syphax, I'll conceal
My thoughts in passion ('tis the surest way :)
I'll bellow out for Rome, and for my country ;
And mouth at Cæsar, till I shake the senate.
Your cold hypocrisy's a stale device,
A worn-out trick: would'st thou be thought in earnest?
Clothe thy feign'd zeal in rage, in fire, in fury!

Syph. In troth, thou'rt able to instruct gray-hairs,
And teach the wily African deceit !

Semp. Once more be sure to try thy skill on Juba.
Mean while I'll hasten to my Roman soldiers,
Inflame the mutiny, and underhand
Blow up their discontents, 'till they break out
Unlook'd for, and discharge themselves on Cato.
Remember, Syphax, we must work in haste:
O think what anxious moments pass between
The birth of plots, and their lost fatal periods.
Oh! 'tis a dreadful interval of time,
Fill'd up with horror all, and big with death!
Destruction hangs on ev'ry word we speak,
On ev'ry thought, 'till the concluding stroke,
Determines all, and closes our design. [Exit

S Y P H A X *solus,*

I'll try if yet I can reduce to reason
This headstrong youth, and make him spurn at Cato.
The time is short, Cæsar comes rushing on us—
But hold! young Juba sees me, and approaches.

SCENE IV.

J U B A, S Y P H A X.

J U B A.

Syphax I joy to meet thee thus alone.
I have observ'd of late thy looks are fall'n,
O'ercastr with gloomy cares and discontent;
Then tell me, Syphax, I conjure thee, tell me,
What are the thoughts that knit thy brow in frowns,
And

And turn thine eye thus coldly on thy Prince?

Syph. 'Tis not my talent to conceal my thoughts,
Or carry smiles and sun-shine in my face,
When discontent sits heavy at my heart;
I have not yet so much the Roman in me.

Jub. Why dost thou cast out such ungen'rous terms:
Against the lords and sov'reigns of the world?
Dost thou not see mankind fall down before them,
And own the force of their superior virtue?
Is there a nation in the wilds of Afric,
Amidst our barren rocks, and burning sands,
That does not tremble at the Roman name?

Syph. Gods! where's the worth that sets this people up
Above your own Numidia's tawny sons!
Do they with tougher sinews bend the bow?
Or flies the jav'lin swifter to its mark,
Launch'd from the vigour of a Roman arm?
Who like our active African instructs
The fiery steed, and trains him to his hand?
Or guides in troops th' embattled elephant,
Loaden with war? these, these, are arts, my Prince,
In which your Zama does not stoop to Rome.

Jub. These are virtues of a meaner rank,
Perfections that are plac'd in bones and nerves.
A Roman soul is bent on higher views:
To civilize the rude unpolish'd world,
And lay it under the restraint of laws;
To make man mild, and sociable to man;
To cultivate the wild licentious savage
With wisdom, discipline and lib'ral arts;
Th' embellishments of life: virtues like these
Make human nature shine, reform the soul,
And break our fierce barbarians into men.

Syph. Patience kind Heav'ns!—excuse an old man's
warmth.

What are those wond'rous civilizing arts,
This Roman polish, and this smooth behaviour,
That render man thus tractable and tame?
Are they not only to disguise our passions?
To set our looks at variance with our thoughts,
To check the starts and sallies of the soul,

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And break off all its commerce with the tongue ;
In short, to change us into other creatures,
Than what our nature and the Gods design'd us ?

Jub. To strike thee dumb : turn up thy eyes to Cato !
There may'st thou see to what a god-like height
The Roman virtues lift up mortal man ;
While good ; and just, and anxious for his friends,
He's still severely bent against himself,
Renouncing sleep, and rest, and food, and ease,
He strives with thirst and hunger, toil and heat,
And when his fortune sets before him all
The pomps and pleasures that his soul can wish,
His rigid virtue will accept of none.

Syph. Believe me, prince, there's not an African
That traverses our vast Numidian deserts
In quest of prey, and lives upon his bow,
But better practises these boasted virtues.
Coarse are his meals, the fortune of the chase,
Amidst the running stream he slacks his thirst,
Toils all the day, and at th' approach of night
On the first friendly bank he throws him down,
Or rests his head upon a rock 'till morn ;
Then rises fresh, pursues his wonted game,
And if the following day he chance to find
A new repast, or an untasted spring,
Blesses his stars, and thinks it luxury.

Jub. Thy prejudices, Syphax, won't discern
What virtues grow from ignorance and choice,
Nor how the hero differs from the brute.
But grant that others cou'd with equal glory
Look down on pleasures, and the baits of sense ;
Where will we find the man that bears affliction,
Great and majestick in his griefs like Cato ?
Heav'ns ! with what strength, what steadiness of mind,
He triumphs in the midst of all his suff'rings !
How does he rise against a load of woes,
And thank the Gods that throw the weight upon
him !

Syph. 'Tis pride, rank pride, and haughtiness of soul !
I think the Romans call it Stoicism.
Had not your royal father thought so highly

Of Roman virtue, and of Cato's cause,
 He had not fall'n by a slave's hand inglorious:
 Nor would his slaughter'd army now have lain
 On Africk sands, disfigur'd with their wounds,
 To gorge the wolves and vultures of Numidia.

Jub. Why dost thou call my sorrows up afresh?
 My father's name brings tears into my eyes.

Syph. Oh! that you'd profit by your father's ills!

Jub. What wouldst thou have me do?

Syph. Abandon Cato.

Jub. Syphax, I should be more than twice an orphan
 By such a loss.

Syph. Ay, there's the tie that binds you!
 You long to call him father. Marcia's charms
 Work in your heart unseen, and plead for Cato.
 No wonder you are deaf to all I say.

Jub. Syphax, your zeal becomes importunate;
 I've hitherto permitted it to rave
 And talk at large; but learn to keep it in,
 Lest it should take more freedom than I'll give it.

Syph. Sir, your great father never us'd me thus.
 Alas, he's dead! but can you e'er forget
 The tender sorrow, and the pangs of nature,
 The fond embraces, and repeated blessings,
 Which you drew from him in your last farewell?
 Still must I cherish the dear, sad remembrance,
 At once to torture and to please my soul:
 The good old king at parting wrung my hand,
 (His eyes brim full of tears) then sighing cry'd,
 Pr'ythee be careful of my son! — his grief
 Swell'd up so high he could not utter more.

Jub. Alas! thy story melts away my soul:
 That best of fathers! how shall I discharge
 The gratitude and duty which I owe him!

Syph. By laying up his councils in your heart.

Jub. His councils bid me yield to thy directions;
 Then, Syphax chide me in severest terms,
 Vent all thy passions, and I'll stand the shock,
 Calm and unruffled as a summer sea,
 When not a breath of wind flies o'er its surface.

Syph. Alas! my prince, I'd guide you to your safety.

Jub.

Jub. I do believe thou wou'dst ; but tell me how ?

Syph. Fly from the fate that follows Cæsar's foes.

Jub. My father scorn'd to do it.

Syph. And therefore dy'd.

Jub. Better to die ten thousand thousand deaths,
Than wound my honour.

Syph. Rather say your love.

Jub. Syphax, I've promis'd to preserve my temper.
Why wilt thou urge me to confess a flame
I long have stifled, and would fain conceal ?

Syph. Believe me, prince, tho' hard to conquer love,
'Tis easy to divert and break its force.

Absence might cure it, or a second mistress

Light up another flame and put out this.

The glowing dames of Zama's royal court

Have faces flush'd with more exalted charms ;

The sun that rolls his chariot o'er their heads,

Works up more fire and colour in their cheeks ;

Were you with these, my prince, you'd soon forget

The pale, unripen'd beauties of the North.

Jub. 'Tis not a set of features, or complexion,
The tincture of a skin that I admire.

Beauty soon grows familiar to the lover,

Fades in his eye, and palls upon the sense.

The virtuous Marcia tow'rs above her sex :

True, she is fair, (Oh how divinely fair !)

But still the lovely maid improves her charms,

With inward greatness, unaffected wisdom,

And sanctity of manners. Cato's soul

Shines out in every thing she acts or speaks,

While winning mildness and attractive smiles

Dwell in her looks, and with becoming grace

Softens the rigour of her father's virtues.

Syph. How does your tongue grow wanton in her
praise !

But on my knees I beg you wou'd consider——

Enter MARCIA and LUCIA.

Jub. Hah ! Syphax, is't not she——she moves this
way :

And with her Lucia, Lucius's fair daughter.

My heart beats thick—I pr'ythee, Syphax, leave me.
Syph. Ten thousand curses fallen on 'em both!
 Now will this woman with a single glance
 Undo what I've been lab'ring all this while. [*Exit.*]

S C E N E V.

JUBA, MARCIA, LUCIA.

JUBA.

HAil, charming maid! how does thy beauty smoothe
 The face of war, and make ev'n horror smile!
 At sight of thee my heart shakes off its sorrows;
 I feel a dawn of joy break in upon me,
 And for a while forget th' approach of Cæsar.

Mar. I shou'd be griev'd, young prince, to think my
 presence

Unbent your thoughts, and slacken'd 'em to arms.
 While warm with slaughter, our victorious foe
 Threatens aloud, and calls you to the field.

Jub. O Marcia, let me hope thy kind concern
 And gentle wishes follow me to battle!

The thought will give new vigour to my arm,
 Add strength and weight to my descending sword,
 And drive it in a tempest on the foe.

Mar. My pray'rs and wishes always shall attend
 The friends of Rome, the glorious cause of virtue,
 And men approv'd of by the Gods and Cato.

Jub. That Juba may deserve thy pious cares,
 I'll gaze for ever on thy god-like father,
 Transplanting, one by one, into my life,
 His bright perfections, 'till I shine like him.

Mar. My father never at a time like this
 Would lay out his great soul in words, and waste
 Such precious moments.

Jub. Thy reproofs are just;
 Thou virtuous maid; I'll hasten to my troops,
 And fire their languid souls with Cato's virtue.
 If e'er I lead them to the field, when all

The

The war shall stand ranged in its just array,
 And dreadful pomp : then will I think on thee !
 O lovely maid ! then will I think on thee !
 And in the shock of charging hosts, remember
 What glorious deeds shou'd grace the man, who hopes
 For Marcia's love. [Exit.

S C E N E VI.

LUCIA, MARCIA.

LUCIA.

MARCIA, you're too severe :
 How cou'd you chide the young good-natured
 prince,

And drive him from you with so stern an air,
 A prince that loves and dotes on you to death !

Mar. 'Tis therefore, Lucia, that I chide him from me
 His air, his voice, his looks, his honest soul.
 Speak all so movingly in his behalf,
 I dare not trust myself to hear him talk.

Luc. Why will you fight against so sweet a passion,
 And steel your heart to such a world of charms ?

Mar. How, Lucia, wou'd'st thou have me sink away
 In pleasing dreams, and lose myself in love,
 When ev'ry moment Cato's life's at stake ?
 Caesar comes arm'd with terror and revenge,
 And aims his thunder at my father's head :
 Shou'd not the sad occasion swallow up
 My other cares, and draw them all into it ?

Luc. Why have not I this constancy of mind,
 Who have so many griefs to try its force ?
 Sure, nature form'd me of her softest mould,
 Enfeebled all my soul with tender passions,
 And sunk me ev'n below my own weak sex:
 Pity and love, by turns, oppress my heart.

Mar. Lucia, disburthen all thy cares on me,
 And let me share thy most retir'd distress ?
 Tell me who raises up this conflict in thee ?

Luc. I need not blush to name them, when I tell thee
They're Marcia's brothers, and the sons of Cato.

Mar. They both behold thee with their sisters eyes,
And often have reveal'd their passion to me.
But tell me, whose address thou fav'rest most?
I long to know, and yet I dread to hear it.

Luc. Which is it Marcia wishes for?

Mar. For neither——

And yet for both—The youths have equal share
In Marcia's wishes, and divide their sister:

But tell me, which of them is Lucia's choice?

Luc. Marcia, they are both high in my esteem,
But in my love—Why wilt thou make me name him?
Thou know'st it is a blind and foolish passion,
Pleas'd and disgusted with it knows not what——

Mar. O Lucia, I am perplex'd, O tell me which
I must hereafter call my happy brother?

Luc. Suppose 'twere Portius, could you blame my
choice?

——O Portius, thou hast stol'n away my soul!
With what a grateful tenderness he loves!
And breathes the softest, the sincerest vows!
Complacency, and truth, and manly sweetness
Dwell ever on his tongue, and smooth his thoughts.
Marcus is over-warm, his fond complaints
Have so much earnestness and passion in them,
I hear him with a secret kind of horror,
And tremble at his vehemence of temper.

Mar. Alas, poor youth! how can't thou throw him
from thee?

Lucia, thou know'st not half the love he bears thee?
Whene'er he speaks of thee, his heart's in flames,
He sends out all his soul in ev'ry word,
And thinks, and talks, and looks like one transported.
Unhappy youth! How will thy coldness raise
Tempests and storms in his afflicted bosom!
I dread the consequence.

Luc. You seem to plead
Against your brother Portius.

Mar. Heav'n forbid!

Had Portius been the unsuccessful lover,

The

The same compassion wou'd have fall'n on him.

Luc. Was ever virgin love distressed like mine!
 Portius himself oft falls in tears before me,
 As if he mourn'd his rival's ill success,
 Then bids me hide the motions of my heart,
 Nor shew which way it turns. So much he fears
 The sad effects that it would have on Marcus.

Mar. He knows too well how easily he's fir'd,
 And wou'd not plunge his brother in despair,
 But waits for happier times, and kinder moments.

Luc. Alas, too late I find myself involved
 In endless griefs, and labyrinth of woe;
 Born to afflict my Marcia's family,
 And sow dissention in the hearts of brothers;
 Tormenting thought! it cuts into my Soul.

Mar. Let us not, Lucia, aggravate our sorrows,
 But to the gods permit th' event of things.
 Our lives, discolour'd with our present woes,
 May still grow bright, and smile with happier hours.

So the pure limpid stream, when foul with stains,
 Of rushing torrents, and descending rains,
 Works itself clear, and as it runs, resigns;
 Till by degrees the floating mirror shines,
 Reflects each flow'r that on the border grows,
 And a new heav'n in its fair bosom shews. [*Exeunt.*]



ACT II. SCENE I.

The SENATE.

SEMPRONIUS.

ROME still survives in this assembled senate!
 Let us remember we are Cato's friends,
 And act like men who claim that glorious title.

Luc. Cato will soon be here and open to us
 Th' occasion of our meeting. Hark! he comes!

[*A sound of trumpets.*
 May

May all the guardian gods of Rome direct him!

Enter C A T O.

Cato. Fathers, we once again are met in council;
Cæsar's approach has summon'd us together,
And Rome attends her fate from our resolves:
How shall we treat this bold aspiring man?
Success still follows him, and backs his crimes:
Pharfalia gave him Rome, Egypt has since
Receiv'd his yoke, and the whole Nile is Cæsar's.
Why should I mention Juba's overthrow,
And Scipio's death? Numidia's burning sands
Still smook with blood. 'Tis time we should decree
What course to take. Our foe advances on us,
And envies us even Lybia's sultry desarts.
Fathers, Pronounce your thoughts, are they still fixt
To hold it out, and fight it to the last?
Or are your hearts subdu'd at length, and wrought
By time, and ill success to a submission?
Sempronius, speak.

Semp. My voice is still for war.
Gods, can a Roman senate long debate
Which of the two to choose, slav'ry or death!
No, let us rise at once, gird on our swords,
And at the head of our remaining troops,
Attack the foe, break through the thick array
Of his throng'd legions, and charge home upon him:
Perhaps some arm, more lucky than the rest,
May reach his heart, and free the world from bondage.
Rise, fathers, rise! 'tis Rome demands your help:
Rise, and revenge her slaughter'd citizens,
Or share their fate! the corps of half her senate
Manure the field of Thessaly, while we
Sit here delib'rating in cold debates,
If we should sacrifice our lives to honour,
Or wear them out in servitude and chains.
Rouse up for shame! our brothers of Pharfalia
Point at their wounds, and cry aloud—to battle!
Great Pompey's shade complains that we are slow,
And Scipio's ghost walks unreveng'd amongst us!

Cato. Let not a torrent of impetuous zeal

Trans-

Transport thee thus beyond the bounds of reason :
 True fortitude is seen in great exploits
 That justice warrants, and that wisdom guides,
 All else is tow'ring frenzy and distraction.
 Are not the lives of those who draw the sword
 In Rome's defence intrusted to our care ?
 Should we thus lead them to a field of slaughter
 Might not the impartial world with reason say
 We lavish'd at our deaths the blood of thousands,
 To grace our fall, and make our ruin glorious ?
 Lucius, we next would know what's your opinion.

Lue. My thoughts I must confess, are turn'd on peace.
 Already have our quarrels fill'd the world
 With widows and with orphans ; Scythia mourns
 Our guilty wars, and earth's remotest regions
 Lie half unpeopled by the feuds of Rome :
 'Tis time to sheath the sword, and spare mankind.
 It is not Caesar, but the Gods, my fathers,
 The Gods declare against us, and repel
 Our vain attempts. To urge the foe to battle,
 (Prompted by blind revenge and wild despair)
 Were to refuse th' awards of Providence,
 And not to rest in Heav'n's determination.
 Already have we shewn our Love to Rome,
 Now let us shew submission to the Gods.
 We took up arms, not to revenge ourselves,
 But free the commonwealth ; when this end fails,
 Arms have no further use : our country's cause,
 That drew our swords, now wrest 'em from our hands,
 And bids us not delight in Roman blood,
 Unprofitably shed : what men could do,
 Is done already : heav'n and earth will witness,
 If Rome must fall, that we are innocent.

Semp. This smooth discourse, and mild behaviour oft
 Conceal a traitor — something whispers me
 All is not right — Cato, beware of Lucius.

[*Aside to Cato.*]

Cato. Let us appear not rash nor diffident ;
 Immod'rate valour swells into a fault ;
 And fear admitted into public councils,
 Betrays like treason. Let us shun 'em both.
 Fathers, I cannot see that our affairs

Are

Are grown thus desp'rate, we have bulwarks round us:
 Within our walls are troops enured to toil
 In Africk's heat, and season'd to the sun;
 Numidia's spacious kingdom lies behind us,
 Ready to rise at its young prince's call.
 While there is hope do not distrust the Gods:
 But wait at least 'till Cæsar's near approach
 Force us to yield. 'Twill never be too late
 To sue for chains, and own a conqueror.
 Why should Rome fall a moment ere her time?
 No, let us draw her term of freedom out
 To its full length, and spin it to the last,
 So shall we gain still one day's liberty;
 And let me perish, but in Cato's judgment,
 A day, an hour of virtuous liberty,
 Is worth a whole eternity in bondage.

Enter MARCUS.

Mar. Fathers, this moment, as I watch'd the gate;
 Lodg'd on my post, a herald is arriv'd
 From Cæsar's camp, and with him comes old Decius,
 The Roman knight; he carries in his looks
 Impatience, and demands to speak with Cato.

Cato. By your permission, fathers, bid him enter.

[Exit Marcus.]

Decius was once my friend, but other prospects
 Have loos'd those ties, and bound him fast to Cæsar.
 His message may determine our resolves.

SCENE II.

DECIVS, CATO.

DECIVS.

CÆSAR sends health to Cato —

Cato. Could he send it
 To Cato's slaughter'd friends, it would be welcome.
 Are not your orders to address the senate?

Dec. My business is with Cato; Cæsar sees
 The straits to which you're driven; and, as he knows
 Cato's high worth, is anxious for your life.

Cato. My life is grafted on the fate of Rome:
 Would he save Cato? Bid him spare his country.

Tell

Tell your dictator this: and tell him, Cato
Disdains a life, which he has power to offer.

Dec. Rome and her senators submit to Cæsar;
Her generals and her consuls are no more,
Who check'd his conquests, and denied his triumphs.
Why will not Cato be this Cæsar's friend?

Cato. Those very reasons thou hast urged, forbid it,

Dec. Cato, I've orders to expostulate,
And reason with you, as from friend to friend;
Think on the storm that gathers o'er your head,
And threatens ev'ry hour to burst upon it;
Still may you stand high in your contry's honours;
Do but comply, and make your peace with Cæsar,
Rome will rejoice, and cast its eyes on Cato,
As on the second of mankind.

Cato. No more:

I must not think of life on such conditions.

Dec. Cæsar is well acquainted with your virtues,
And therefore sets this value on your life:
Let him but know the price of Cato's friendship,
And name your terms.

Cato. Bid him disband his legions,
Restore the commonwealth to liberty,
Submit his actions to the public censure,
And stand the judgment of a Roman senate:
Bid him do this, and Cato is his friend.

Dec. Cato, the world talks loudly of your wisdom—

Cato. Nay more, tho' Cato's voice was ne'er employ'd
To clear the guilty, and to varnish crimes,
Myself will mount the Rostrum in his favour,
And strive to gain his pardon from the people.

Dec. A stile, like this, becomes a conqueror.

Cato. Decius, a stile like this, becomes a Roman.

Dec. What is a Roman, that is Cæsar's foe?

Cato. Greater than Cæsar: He's a friend to virtue.

Dec. Consider, Cato, you're in Utica,
And at the head of your own little senate;
You don't now thunder in the capitol;
With all the mouths of Rome to second you.

Cato. Let him consider that, who drives us hither:
'Tis Cæsar's sword has made Rome's senate little,
And thinn'd its ranks. Alas, thy dazzled eye

Beholds

Beholds this man in a false glaring light;
Which conquest and success have thrown upon him;
Did'st thou but view him right, thou'dst see him black
With murder, treason, sacrilege, and crimes,
That strike my soul with horror but to name 'em.
I know thou look'st on me, as on a wretch
Beset with ills, and cover'd with misfortunes;
But, by the Gods I swear, millions of worlds
Shou'd never buy me to be like that Cæsar.

Dec. Does Cato send this answer back to Cæsar,
For all his gen'rous cares and proffer'd friendship?

Cato. His cares for me are insolent and vain:
Presumptuous man! the Gods take care of Cato.
Wou'd Cæsar shew the greatness of his soul!
Bid him employ his care for these my friends,
And make good use of his ill-gotten pow'r,
By shelt'ring men much better than himself.

Dec. Your high unconquer'd heart makes you forget
You are a man. You rush on your destruction:
But I have done. When I relate hereafter
The tale of this unhappy embassy,
All Rome will be in tears. [Exit Decius.]

S C E N E III.

SEMPRONIUS, LUCIUS, CATO.

SEMPRONIUS.

CATO, we thank thee.

The mighty genius of immortal Rome
Speaks in thy voice, thy soul breathes liberty.
Cæsar will shrink to hear the words thou utter'st,
And shudder in the midst of all his conquests.

Luc. The senate owns its gratitude to Cato,
Who with so great a soul consults its safety,
And guards our lives while he neglects his own.

Sem. Sempronius gives no thanks on this account:
Lucius, seems fond of life; but what is life?
'Tis not to stalk about, and draw fresh air
From time to time, or gaze upon the sun;
'Tis to be free. When liberty is gone,
Life grows insipid, and has lost its relish:
O cou'd my dying hand but lodge a sword

In Cæsar's Bosom, and revenge my Country,
By Heav'n's I could enjoy the Pangs of death,
And smile in agony.

Luc. Others perhaps,
May serve their Country with as warm a zeal,
Tho' 'tis not kindled into so much rage.

Semp. This sober conduct is a mighty virtue
In lukewarm patriots.

Cato. Come! no more, Sempronius.
All here are friends to Rome, and to each other.
Let us not weaken still the weaker side
By our divisions.

Semp. Cato, my resentments
Are sacrificed to Rome—I stand reprov'd.

Cato. Fathers, 'tis time you come to a resolve.

Luc. Cato, we all got into your opinion,
Cæsar's behaviour has convinc'd the senate.
We ought to hold it out 'till terms arrive.

Semp. We ought to hold it out 'till death; but, Cato,
My private voice is drown'd amidst the senate's.

Cato. Then let us rise my friends, and strive to fill
This little Interval, this pause of life,
(While yet our Liberty and fate are doubtful)
With resolution, Friendship, Roman bravery,
And all the virtues we can croud into it;
That heav'n may see it ought to be prolong'd.
Fathers, farewell—The young Numidian Prince
Comes forward and expects to know our counsels.

[*Exeunt senators.*]

S C E N E IV.

C A T O, J U B A.

C A T O.

J U B A, the Roman senate has resolv'd,
'Till time give better Prospects, still to keep
The sword unsheath'd, and turn its edge on Cæsar.

Jub. The resolution fits a Roman Senate.
But, Cato, lend me for a while thy patience,
And condescend to hear a young man speak.
My father, when some Days before his death

C

He

He ordered me to march for Utica,
 (Alas, I though not then his death so near!)
 Wept o'er me, prest me in his aged arms,
 And, as his griefs gave way, my son, said he,
 Whatever fortune shall befall thy father,
 Be Cato's friend; he'll train thee up to great
 And virtuous deeds: do but observe him well,
 Thou'lt shun misfortunes, or thou'lt learn to bear 'em.

Cato. Juba, thy father was a worthy prince,
 And merited, alas! a better fate;
 But heav'n thought otherwise.

Jub. My father's fate;
 In spite of all the fortitude, that shines
 Before my face, in Cato's great example,
 Subdues my soul, and fills my eyes with tears.

Cato. It is an honest Sorrow, and becomes thee.

Jub. My father drew respect from foreign climes:
 The kings of Africk sought him for their friend;
 Kings far remote, that rule, as fame reports,
 Behind the hidden sources of the Nile,
 In distant worlds, on t'other side the Sun;
 Oft have their black ambassadors appeared,
 Loaden with gifts, and fill'd the courts of Zama.

Cato. I am no stranger to thy father's greatness!

Jub. I would not boast the greatness of my father.
 But point out new alliances to Cato,
 Had we not better leave this Utica
 To arm Numidia in our cause, and court
 Th' Assistance of my father's powerful friends?
 Did they know Cato, our remotest kings
 Wou'd pour embattled multitudes about him;
 Their swarthy hosts wou'd darken all our plains,
 Doubling the native horror of the war,
 And making Death more grim.

Cato. And canst thou think
 Cato will fly before the sword of Cæsar!
 Reduc'd like Hannibal to seek relief
 From court to court, and wander up and down
 A vagabond in Africk.

Jub. Cato, perhaps
 I'm too officious, but my forward Cares
 Wou'd fain preserve a life of so much value.

My

My heart is wounded when I see such virtue
Afflicted by the weight of such misfortunes.

Cato. Thy nobleness of soul obliges me,
But know, young prince, that valour soars above
What the world calls misfortune and affliction.
These are not ills; else wou'd they never fall
On heav'n's first fav'rites, and the best of men:
The Gods, in bounty, work up storms about us,
That give mankind occasion to exert
Their hidden strength, and throw out into practice
Virtues which shun the day, and lie conceal'd
In the smooth seasons and the calms of life.

Jub. I'm charm'd whene'er thou talk'st! I pant for
virtue!

And all my soul endeavours at perfection.]

Cato. Dost thou love watchings, abstinence, and toil,
Laborious virtues all? learn them from Cato:
Success and fortune must thou learn from Cæsar.

Jub. The best good fortune that can fall on Juba,
The whole success, at which my heart aspires,
Depends on Cato.

Cato. What does Juba say?
Thy words confound me.

Jub. I would fain retract them,
Give 'em me back again. They aim'd at nothing.

Cato. Tell me thy wish, young prince; make not
A stranger to thy thoughts. [my ear

Jub. Oh, they're extravagant;
Still let me hide them.

Cato. What can Juba ask
That Cato will refuse!

Jub. I fear to name it.
Marcia—inherits all her father's virtues.

Cato. What wouldst thou say?

Jub. Cato, thou hast a daughter.

Cato. Adieu, young prince: I wou'd not hear a word
Shou'd lessen thee in my esteem: remember
The hand of fate is over us, and heav'n
Exacts severity from all our thoughts:
It is not now a time to talk of ought
But chains, or conquest; liberty or death. [Exit.

C A T O.
S C E N E V.

SYPHAX, JUBA.

SYPHAX.

HOW's this, my prince! What, cover'd with
confusion?

You look as if yon stern philosopher
Had just now chid you.

Jub. Syphax, I'm undone!

Syph. I know it well.

Jub. Cato thinks meanly on me.

Syph. And so will all mankind.

Jub. I've open'd to him

The weakness of my soul, my love for Marcia.

Syph. Cato's a proper person to entrust
A love tail with.

Jub. Oh, I could pierce my heart,
My foolish heart! Was ever wretch like Juba!

Syph. Alas, my prince, how are you chang'd of late!
I've known young Juba rise before the sun,
To beat the thicket where the tiger slept,
Or seek the lion in his dreadful haunts:

How did the colour mount into your cheeks,
When first you rous'd him to the chase! I've seen you,
Ev'n in the Lybian dog-days, hunt him down,
Then charge him close, provoke him to the rage
Of fangs and claws, and stooping from your horse
Rivit the painting savage to the ground.

Jub. Pr'ythee no more!

Syph. How would the old king smile
To see you weigh the paws, when tipp'd with gold,
And throw the shaggy spoil about your shoulders!

Jub. Syphax, this old man's talk (tho' honey flow'd
In ev'ry word) wou'd now lose all its sweetness.
Cato's displeas'd, and Marcia lost for ever!

Syph. Young prince, I yet cou'd give you good advice,
Marcia might still be yours.

Jub. What say'st thou, Syphax?
By heav'ns thou turn'it me all into attention.

Syph.

Syph. *Marcia might still be yours.*

Jub. As how, dear Syphax?

Syph. Juba commands Numidia's hardy troops,
Mounted on steeds, unused to the restraint
Of curbs or bits, and fleetier than the winds:
Give but the word, we'll snatch this damsel up,
And bear her off.

Jub. Can such dishonest thoughts
Rise up in man! wou'dst thou seduce my youth
To do an act that would destroy my honour?

Syph. Gods, I cou'd tear my beard to hear you talk!
Honour's a fine imaginary notion,
That draws in raw and unexperienc'd men
To real mischiefs, while they hunt a shadow.

Jub. Wou'dst thou degrade a prince into a ruffian!

Syph. The boasted ancestors of these great men,
Whose virtues you admire, were all such ruffians!
This dread of nations, this almighty Rome,
That comprehends in her wide empire's bounds
All under heav'n, was founded on a rape,
Your Scipio's, Cæsar's, Pompey's, and your Cato's,
(The gods on earth) are all the spurious brood
Of violated maids, of ravish'd sabines.

Jub. Syphax, I fear that hoary head of thine
Abounds too much in our Numidian wiles. [world.

Syph. Indeed, my prince, you want to know the
You have not read mankind, your youth admires
The throws and swellings of a Roman soul,
Cato's bold flights, th' extravagance of virtue.

Jub. If knowledge of the world makes man per-
fidious,

May Juba ever live in ignorance!

Syph. Go, go, you're young.

Jub. Gods, must I tamely bear
This arrogance unanswer'd! thou'rt a traitor
A false old traitor.

Syph. I have gone to far.

[*Aside.*

Jub. Cato shall know the baseness of thy soul.

Syph. I must appease this storm, or perish in it. [*Aside.*
Young prince, behold those locks that are grown white
Beneath a helmet in your father's battles.

Jub. Those locks shall ne'er protect thy innocence.

Syph. Must one rash word, th' infirmity of age,
Throw down the merit of my better years?
This the reward of a whole life of service!
—Curse on the boy! how steadily he hears me! [*Aside.*]

Jub. Is it because the throne of my forefathers
Still stands unfill'd, and that Numidia's crown
Hangs doubtful yet, whose head it shall enclose,
Thou thus presumest to treat thy prince with scorn?

Syph. Why will you rive my heart with such expressions?

Does not old Syphax follow you to war?
What are his aims? Why does he load with darts
His trembling hand, and crush beneath a cask
His wrinkled brows what is it he aspires to?
Is it not this? to shed the flow remains,
His last poor ebb of blood in your defence!

Jub. Syphax, no more! I would not hear you talk.

Syph. Not hear me talk? what when my faith to Juba,
My royal master's son is call'd in question?
My prince may strike me dead, and I'll be dumb:
But whilst I live I must not hold my tongue,
And languish out old age in his displeasure.

Jub. I thou know'st the way too well into my heart,
I do believe thee loyal to thy prince.

Syph. What greater instance can I give! I've offer'd
To do an action which my soul abhors,
And gain you whom you love at any price.

Jub. Was this thy motive? I've been too hasty.

Syph. And 'tis for this my prince has call'd me traitor.

Jub. Sure thou mistak'st; I did not call thee so.

Syph. You did indeed, my prince, you call'd me traitor.
Nay further, threaten'd you'd complain to Cato.
Of what, my prince, wou'd you complain to Cato?
That Syphax loves you, and wou'd sacrifice
His life, nay more, his honour in your service.

Jub. Syphax, I know thou lov'st me: but indeed,
Thy zeal for Juba carry'd thee too far.
Honour's a sacred tie, the law of kings,
The noble mind's distinguishing perfection,
That aids, and strengthens virtue, where it meets her,
And

And imitates her actions, where she is not.
It ought not to be sported with.

Syph. By heav'ns,
I'm ravish'd when you talk thus, tho' you chide me!
Alas, I've hitherto been used to think
A blind officious zeal to serve my king,
The ruling principle, that ought to burn
And quench all others in a subject's heart.
Happy the people who preserve their honour
By the same duties that oblige their prince!

Jub. Syphax, thou now begin'st to speak thyself.
Numidia's grown a scorn among the nations
For breach of public vows. Our punick faith
Is infamous, and branded to a proverb.
Syphax, we'll join our cares, to purge away
Our country's crimes, and clear her reputation.

Syph. Believe me prince, you make old Syphax weep,
To hear you talk—but 'tis with tears of joy.
If e'er your father's crown adorn your brows,
Numidia will be blest by Cato's lectures.

Jub. Syphax, thy hand! we'll mutually forget
The warmth of youth, and frowardness of age;
Thy prince esteems thy worth, and loves thy person.
If e'er the scepter comes into my hand,
Syphax, shall stand the second in my kingdom.

Syph. Why will you o'erwhelm my age with kindness?
My joy grows burdensome, I shan't support it.

Jub. Syphax, farewell. I'll hence, and try to find
Some blest occasion that may set me right
In Cato's thoughts. I'd rather have that man
Approve my deed, than worlds for my admirers. [*Exit.*]

S Y P H A X *solus.*

Young men soon give, and soon forget affronts;
Old age is slow in both—A false old traitor!
Those words, rash boy, my chance to cost thee dear.
My heart had still some foolish fondness for thee:
But hence! 'tis gone: I give it to the winds:
Caesar, I'm wholly thine.——

S C E N E

SCENE IV.

SYPHAX, SEMPRONIUS.

SYPHAX.

ALL hail, Sempronius !
Well Cato's senate is resolv'd to wait
The fury of a siege before it yields.

Semp. Syphax, we both were on the verge of fate :
Lucius declar'd for peace, and terms were offer'd
To Cato by a messenger from Cæsar.

Shou'd they submit ere our designs are ripe,
We both must perish in the common wreck,
Lost in the gen'ral undistinguish'd ruin.

Syph. But how stands Cato ?

Semp. Thou hast seen mount Atlas.
Whilst storms and tempests thunder on its brows,
And oceans break their billows at its feet,
It stands unmoved, and glories in its height.
Such is that haughty man ; his tow'ring soul,
Midst all the shocks and injuries of fortune,
Rises superior, and looks down on Cæsar.

Syph. But what's this messenger ?

Semp. I've practis'd with him,
And found a means to let the victor know
That Syphax and Sempronius are his friends.
But let me now examine in my turn :
Is Juba fixt ?

Syph. Yes—but it is to Cato.
I've try'd the force of ev'ry reason on him,
Sooth'd and caress'd, been angry, sooth'd again,
Laid safety, life, and int'rest in his fight.
But all are vain, he scorns them all for Cato.

Semp. Come 'tis no matter, we shall do without him.
He'll make a pretty figure in a triumph,
And serve to trip before the victor's chariot.
Syphax, I now may hope thou hast forsook
Thy Juba's cause, and wishest Marcia mine.

Syph. May she be thine as fast as thou would'st have her.

Semp. Syphax, I love that woman ; tho' I curse

Her

Her and myself, yet spite of me, I love her.

Syph. Make Cato sure, and give up Utica,
Cæsar will ne'er refuse thee such a trifle.
But are thy troops prepar'd for a revolt?
Does the sedition catch from man to man,
And run among their ranks?

Semp. All, all is ready,
The factious leaders are our friends, that spread
Murmurs and discontents among the soldiers,
They count their toilsome marches, long fatigues,
Unusual fastings, and will bear no more
This medley of philosophy and war.
Within an hour they'll storm the senate-house.

Syph. Mean while I'll draw up my Numidian troops
Within the square to exercise their arms,
And, as I see occasion, favour thee.
I laugh to think how your unshaken Cato
Will look aghast, while unforeseen destruction
Pour in upon him thus from every side.

So, where our wide Numidian wastes extend,
Sudden, th' impetuous hurricanes descend,
Wheel through the air, in circling eddies play,
Tear up the sand, and sweep whole plains away.
The helpless traveller, with wild surprise
Sees the dry desert all round him rise,
And smother'd in the dusty whirlwind dies.

[*Exeunt.*]



ACT III. SCENE I.

MARCUS and PORTIUS.

MARCUS.

THanks to my stars I have not ranged about
The wilds of life, ere I could find a friend;
Nature first pointed out my Portius to me,
And early taught me, by her sacred force,
To love thy person, ere I knew thy merit:
Till what shas instinct, grew up into friendship.

Por. Marcus, the friendships of the world are oft
Confed'racies in vice, or leagues of pleasure;
Ours has severest virtue for its basis,
And such a friendship ends not but with life.

Marc. Portius thou know'st my soul in all its weak-
ness,

Then pr'ythee spare me on its tender side.
Indulge me but in love, my other passions
Shall rise and fall by virtue's nicest rules.

Por. When love's well timed, 'tis not a fault to love.
The strong, the brave, the virtuous, and the wise,
Sink in the soft captivity together.
I would not urge thee to dismiss thy Passion,
(I know 'twere vain) but to suppress its force,
Till better times may make it look more graceful.

Marc. Alas! thou talk'st like one who never felt
Th' impatient throbs and longings of a soul
That pants and reaches after distant good.
A lover does not live by vulgar time:
Believe me, Portius, in my Lucia's absence,
Life hangs upon me, and becomes a burden:
And yet, when I behold the charming maid,
I'm ten times more undone: while hope and fear,
And grief, and rage, and love, rise up at once,
And with variety of pain distract me.

Por. What can thy Portius do to give thee help?

Marc.

Marc. Portius, thou oft enjoy'st the fair one's presence ;

Then undertake my cause, and plead it to her
With all the strength and heat of eloquence,
Fraternal love and friendship can inspire.
Tell her thy brother languishes to death,
And fades away, and withers in his bloom ;
That he forgets his sleep, and loaths his food,
That youth, and health, and war are joyless to him :
Discribe his anxious days, and restless nights,
And all the torments that thou see'st me suffer

Por. Marcus, I beg thee give me not an office
That suits with me so ill. Thou know'st my temper.

Mar. Wilt thou behold me sinking in my woes ?
And wilt thou not reach out a friendly arm,
To raise me from amidst this plunge of sorrows ?

Por. Marcus, thou can'st not ask what I'd refuse.
But here believe me, I've a thousand reasons.——

Mar. I know thou'lt say my passion's out of season,
That Cato's great example and misfortunes
Should both conspire to drive it from my thoughts.
But what's all this to one who loves like me !
Oh Portius, Portius, from my soul I wish
Thou did'st but know thyself what 'tis to love !
Then would'st thou pity and Assist thy brother.

Por. What should I do ! if I disclose my passion
Our friendship's at an end : if I conceal it,
The world will call me false to a friend and brother
Aside.

Mar. But see where Lucia, at her wonted hour,
Amidst the cool of yon high marble arch.
Enjoys the noon day breeze ! observe her, Portius !
That face, that shape, those eyes, that heav'n of
beauty !

Observe her well, and blame me if thou can'st.

Por. She sees us and advances——

Marc. I'll withdraw,
And leave you for a while. Remember, Portius !
Thy brother's life depends upon thy tongue.

SCENE II.

LUCIA, PORTIUS.

LUCIA.

DID not I see your brother Marcus here?
Why did he fly the place, and shun my presence.

Por. Oh, Lucia, language is too faint to shew
His rage of love: it preys upon his life;
He pines, he sickens, he despairs: he dies:
His passions and his virtues lie confus'd,
And mixt together in so wild a tumult,
That the whole man is quite disfigured in him:
Heav'n's! would one think 'twere possible for love
To make such ravage in a noble soul!
Oh, Lucia, I'm distress'd: my heart bleeds for him:
Ev'n now, while thus I stand blest in thy presence,
A sacred damp of grief comes o'er my thoughts,
And I'm unhappy, tho' thou smil'st upon me.

Luc. How wilt thou guard thy honor, in the shock
Of love and friendship! think betimes, my Portius
Think how the unptial tie, that might ensure
Our mutual bliss, would raise to such a height
Thy brother's grief, as might perhaps, destroy him.

Por. Alas poor youth! what dost thou think, my
Lucia?

His gen'rous, open, undefigning heart
Has begg'd his rival to solicit for him.
Then do not strike him dead with a denial.
But hold him up in life, and cheer his soul
With the faint glimm'ring of a doubtful hope:
Perhaps when we have pass'd these gloomy hours,
And weather'd out the storm that bears upon us——

Luc. No, Portius, no! I see thy sister's tears.—
Thy father's anguish, and thy brother's death,
In the pursuit of our ill-fated loves,
And, Portius, here I swear, to heav'n I swear,
To heav'n and all the pow'r that judge mankind,
Never to mix my plighted hands with thine,
While such a cloud of mischiefs hangs about us,

But

But to forget our loves, and drive thee out
From all my thoughts, as far—as I am able.

Por. What hast thou said! I'm thunder-struck—
recall

Those hasty words, or I am lost for ever.

Luc. Has not the vow already pass'd my lips?
The gods have heard it and 'tis seal'd in heav'n,
May all the vengeance, that was ever pour'd
On perjur'd heads o'erwhelm me, if I break it!

[After a pause.]

Por. Fixt in astonishment, I gaze upon thee;
Like one just blasted by a stroke from heav'n,
Who pants for breath, and stiffens, yet alive,
In dreadful looks: a monument of wrath!

Luc. At length I've acted my severest part,
I feel the woman breaking in upon me,
And melt about my heart! my tears will flow,
But oh I'll think no more! the hand of fate
Has torn thee from me, and I must forget thee.

Por. Hard-hearted, cruel maid!

Luc. Oh stop those sounds,
Those killing sounds? Why dost thou frown upon me,
My blood runs cold, my heart forgets to heave,
And life itself goes out at thy displeasure.
The gods forbid us to indulge our loves,
But Oh! I cannot bear thy hate and live!

Por. Talk not of love, thou never knew'st its force.
I've been deluded, led into a dream
Of fancied bliss. O Lucia, cruel maid!
Thy dreadful vow, loaden with death still sounds
In my stunn'd ears. What shall I say or do?
Quick, let us part! perdition's in thy presence,
And horror dwells about thee!—ha, she faints!
Wretch that I am! what has my rashness done!
Lucia, thou injur'd innocence! thou best
And loveliest of thy sex! awake my Lucia,
Or Portius rushes on his sword to join thee.
—Her imprecations reach not to the tomb,
They shut not out society in death—
But hah! she moves! life wanders up and down
Through all her face and lights up every charm.

D

Luc.

Luc. O Portius, was this well!—to frown on her
That lives upon thy smiles! to call in doubt
The faith of one expiring at thy feet.
That loves thee more than ever woman lov'd!
—What do I say! My half recover'd sense
Forgets the vow in which my soul is bound.
Destruction stands betwixt us! we must part.

Por. Name not the word, my frightened thoughts
run back.

And startle into madness at the sound.

Luc. What wou'dst thou have me do? Consider well
The train of ills our love would draw behind it.
Think Portius, think, thou seest thy dying brother
Stabb'd at his heart, all besinear'd with blood,
Storming at heaven and thee! thy awful fire
Sternly demands the cause, th' accursed cause,
That robs him of his son! poor Marcia trembles,
Then tears her hair, and frantic in her griefs
Calls out on Lucia! what could Lucia answer,
Or how stand up in such a scene of sorrow?

Por. To my confusion and eternal grief,
I must approve the sentence that destroys me.
The mist that hung about my mind, clears up;
And now, athwart the terrors that thy vow
Has planted round thee, thou appear'st more fair,
More amiable, and risest in thy charms.
Lovely't of women! heav'n is in thy soul,
Beauty and virtue shine for ever round thee,
Bright'ning each other! thou art all divine!

Luc. Portius, no more! thy words shoot thro' my
heart,

Melt my resolves, and turn me all to love.

Why are those tears of fondness in thy eyes?

Why heaves thy heart? why swells thy soul with sorrow?

It softens me too much—farewel, my Portius,
Farewel, tho' death is in the word; for ever!

Por. Stay, Lucia, stay! what dost thou say? For-
ever?

Luc. Have I not sworn? if, Portius, thy success
Must throw thy brother on his fate, farewel,

Oh,

Oh, how shall I repeat the word! for-ever!

Por. Thus o'er the dying lamp th' unsteady flame
Hangs quiv'ring on a point, leaps off by fits,
And falls again, as loth to quit its hold:
—Thou must not go, my soul still hovers o'er thee,
And can't get loose.

Luc. If the firm Portius shake
To hear of parting, think what Lucia suffers!

Por. 'Tis true, unruffled and serene I've met
The common accidents of life, but here
Such an unlook'd for storm of ills fall on me,
It beats down all my strength. I cannot bear it.
We must not part.

Luc. What dost thou say? not part?
Hast thou forgot the vow that I have made?
Are there not Heav'ns, and Gods and thunder o'er us?
—But see, thy brother Marcus bends this way!
I sicken at the sight. Once more, farewell!
Farewel, and know thou wrong'st me, if thou think'st
Ever was love, or ever grief, like mine. [*Exit.*]

S C E N E III.

MARCUS, PORTIUS.

MARCUS.

PORTIUS, what hopes? how stands she? Am I doom'd
To life or death?

Por. What would'st thou have me say?

Mar. What means this pensive posture? thou appear'st

Like one amazed and terrified.

Por. I've reason.

Mar. Thy down cast looks, and thy disorder'd
thoughts

Tell me my fate. I ask not the success
My cause has found.

Por. I'm griev'd I undertook 'it.

Mar. What? does the barbarous maid insult my
heart,

My aking heart! and triumph in my pains?
That I cou'd cast her from my thoughts for ever?

Por. Away, you're too suspicious in your griefs;
Lucia, though sworn never to think of love,
Compassionates your pains, and pities you!

Marc. Compassionates my pains, and pities me!
What is compassion when 'tis void of love!
Fool that I was to choose so cold a friend
To urge my cause! compassionates my pains!
Pr'ythe what art, what rhet'rick didst thou use
To gain this mighty boon! she pities me!
To one that asks the warm returns of love,
Compassion's cruelty, 'tis scorn, 'tis death——

Por. Marcus, no more! have I deserv'd this treatment?

Mar. What have I said! O Portius, O forgive me!
A soul exasp'rated in ills falls out
With ev'ry thing, its friend, itself——But hah!
What means that shout, big with the sounds of war?
What new alarm?

Por. A second louder yet.
Swells in the winds, and comes more full upon us.

Mar. Oh, for some glorious cause to fall in battle:
Lucia, thou hast undone me! thy disdain
Has broke my heart; 'tis death must give me ease.

Por. Quick, let us hence; who knows if Cato's life
Stands sure? O Marcus I am warm'd, my heart
Leaps at the trumpet's voice, and burns for glory.

[*Exit.*]

S C E N E IV.

Enter SEMPRONIUS, with the Leaders of the Mutiny.

SEMPRONIUS.

AT length the winds are rais'd, the storm blows high
Be it your care, my friends, to keep it up
In its full fury, and direct it right,
Till it has spent itself on Cato's head.

Mean while I'll herd among his friends, and seem
One

One of the number, that whate'er arrive,
My friends, and fellow-foldiers may be safe. [*Exit.*

Lead. We all are safe Sempronius is our friend,
Sempronius is as brave a man as Cato.
But hark! he enters. Bear up boldly to him;
Be sure you beat him down, and bind him fast,
This day will end our toils, and gives us rest!
Fear nothing, for Sempronius is our friend.

S C E N E V.

Enter CATO, SEMPRONIUS, LUCIUS,
PORTIUS, and MARCUS.

C A T O.

WHERE are these bold intrepid sons of war,
That greatly turn their backs upon the foe,
And to their General send a brave defiance?

Semp. Curse on their dastard souls, they stand astonish'd. [*Aside.*

Cato. Perfidious men! and will you thus dishonour
Your past exploits, and sully all your wars?
Do you confess 'twas not a zeal for Rome,
Nor love of liberty, nor thirst of honour,
Drew you thus far; but hopes to share the spoil
Of conquer'd towns, and plunder'd provinces?
Fir'd with such motives you do well to join
With Cato's foes, and follow Cæsar's banners.
Why did I 'scape the envenom'd aspic's rage,
And all the fiery monsters of the desert,
To see this day? why cou'd not Cato fall
Without your guilt? behold, ungrateful men,
Behold my bosom naked to your swords,
And let the man that's injur'd strike the blow.
Which of you all suspects that he is wronged,
Or thinks he suffers greater ills than Cato?
Am I distinguish'd from you but by toils,
Superior toils, and heavier weight of cares?
Painful pre-eminence!

D 3

Semp.

Semp. By heav'ns they droop!
Confusion to the villians! all is lost. [*Aside.*]

Cato. Have you forgotten Libya's burning waste,
Its barren rocks, parch'd earth, and hills of sand,
Its tainted air, and all its broods of poison?
Who was the first to explore th' untrodden path,
When life was hazarded in ev'ry step?
Or, fainting in the long laborious march,
When on the banks of an unlook'd-for stream
You sunk the river with repeated draughts,
Who was the last in all your host that thirsted?

Semp. If some penurious source by chance appear'd,
Scanty of waters, when you scoop'd it dry,
And offer'd the full helmet up to Cato?
Did he not dash th' untasted moisture from him?
Did not he lead you through the mid-day sun,
And clouds of dust? Did not his temples glow
In the same sultry winds, and scorching heats?

Cato. Hence, worthless men! hence! and complain
to Cæsar

You could not undergo the toils of war,
Nor bear the hardships that your leader bore.

Luc. See, Cato, see th' unhappy men! they weep!
Fear, and remorse, and sorrow for their crime,
Appear in ev'ry look, and plead for mercy.

Cato. Learn to be honest men, give up your leaders,
And pardon shall descend on all the rest.

Semp. Cato, commit these wretches to my care.
First let 'em each be broken on the rack
Then, with what life remains, impaled and left
To writhe at leisure round the bloody stake:
There let 'em hang, and taint the southern wind.
The partners of their crime will learn obedience,
When they look up and see their fellow-traitors
Stuck on a fork, and black'ning in the sun.

Luc. Sempronius, why, why wilt thou urge the fate
Of wretched men?

Semp. How! would'st thou clear rebellion!
Lucius (good man) pities the poor offenders
That would imbrue their hands in Cato's blood.

Cato. Forbear Sempronius!—see they suffer death;
But

But in their deaths remember they are men,
Strain not the laws to make their tortures grievous.
Lucius, the base degen'rate age requires
Severity, and justice in its rigour :
This awes an impious, bold, offending world,
Commands obedience, and gives force to laws.
When by just vengeance guilty mortals perish,
The Gods behold their punishment with pleasure,
And lay th' uplifted thunderbolt aside.

Semp. Cato, I execute thy will with pleasure,

Cato. Mean-while we'll sacrifice to liberty,
Remember, O my friends, the laws, the rights,
The gen'rous plan of pow'r deliver'd down
From age to age, by your renown'd forefathers.
(So dearly bought, the price of so much blood)
O let it never perish in your hands !
But piously transmit it to your children.
Do thou, great liberty, inspire our souls,
And make our lives in thy possession happy,
Or our deaths glorious in thy just defence.

[*Exeunt Cato, &c.*]

S C E N E VI.

SEMPRONIUS and the Leaders of the Mutiny,

I L E A D E R.

SEmpronius, you have acted like yourself.
One wou'd have thought you had been half in
earnest.

[*wretches,*

Semp. Villain, stand off, base grov'ling worthless
Mongrels in faction, poor faint hearted traitors !

2 Lead. Nay, now you carry it too far, Sempronius :
Throw off the mask, there are none here but friends.

Semp. Know, villains, when such paltry slaves presume
To mix in treason, if the plot succeeds,
They're thrown neglected by : but if it fails,
They're sure to die like dogs as you shall do.
Here, take these factious monsters, drag 'em forth
To sudden death.

Enter Guards.

1 Lead. Nay, since it comes to this——

Semp.

44
Semp. Dispatch 'em quick, but first pluck out their
tongues,
Lest with their dying breath they sow sedition.
[*Exeunt Guards with the Leaders.*]

S C E N E VII.

SYPHAX and SEMPRONIUS.

SYPHAX.

OUR first design, my friend has prov'd abortive:
Still there remains an after game to play;
My troops are mounted; their Numidian steeds
Snuff up the wind, and long to scour the desert:
Let but Sempronius head us in our flight
We'll force the gate where Marcus keeps his guard,
And hew down all that would oppose our passage.
A day will bring us into Cæsar's camp.

Semp. Confusion! I have fail'd of half my purpose;
Marcia, the charming Marcia's left behind!

Syph. How? Will Sempronius turn a woman's slave!

Semp. Think not thy friend can ever feel the soft
Unmanly warmth and tenderness of love.

Syphax, I long to clasp that haughty maid,
And bend her stubborn virtue to my passion:
When I have gone thus far, I'd cast her off.

Syph. Well said! that's spoken like thyself, Sem-
pronius,

What hinders then, but that thou find her out,
And hurry her away by manly force?

Semp. But how to gain admission? for access
Is given to none but Juba, and her brothers.

Syph. Thou shalt have Juba's dress, and Juba's guards:
The doors will open when Numidia's prince
Seems to appear before the slaves that watch them.

Semp. Heav'ns! what a thought is there! Marcia's
my own?

How will my bosom swell with anxious joy,
When I behold her struggling in my arms,
With glowing beauty, and disorder'd charms,
While fear and anger, with alternate grace,
Pant in her breast, and vary in her face.

So Pluto seiz'd of Proserpine, convey'd
To Hell's tremendous gloom th' affrighted maid.
There grimly smil'd, pleas'd with the beauteous prize,
Nor envy'd Jove his sun-shine and his skies. [*Exit.*]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

LUCIA and MARCIA.

LUCIA.

NOW tell me, Marcia, tell me from thy soul,
If thou believ'st 'tis possible for woman
To suffer greater ills than Lucia suffers?

Mar. O Lucia, Lucia, might my big swoln heart,
Vent all its griefs, and give a loose to sorrow;
Marcia could answer thee in sighs, keep pace
With all thy woes, and count out tear for tear.

Luc. I know thou'rt doom'd alike to be belov'd
By Juba, and thy father's friend Sempronius.
But which of these has power to charm like Portius!

Mar. Still I must beg thee not to name Sempronius!
Lucia, I like not that loud boist'rous man;
Juba to all the brav'ry of a hero
Adds softest love and more than female sweetness;
Juba might make the proudest of our sex,
Any of woman kind, but Marcia, happy.

Luc. And why not, Marcia? come you thrive in vain
To hide your thoughts from one who knows too well
The inward glowings of a heart in love.

Mar. While Cato lives, his daughter has no right
To love or hate, but as his choice directs

Luc. But shou'd this father give you to Sempronius!

Mar. I dare not think he will: but if he should—
Why wilt thou add to all the griefs I suffer
Imaginary ills, and fancy'd tortures!
I hear the sound of feet! they march this way!
Let us retire, and try if we can drown

Each

Each softer thought in sense of present danger;
 When once love pleads admission to our hearts
 (In spite of all the virtue we can boast)
 The woman that deliberates is lost.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E II.

*Enter SEMPRONIUS, dress'd like Juba, with
 Numidian Guards.*

SEMPRONIUS.

THE deer is lodg'd, I've track'd her to her covert.
 Be sure you mind the word, and when I give it
 Rush in at once, and seize upon your prey.
 Let not her cries or tears have force to move you.
 —How will the young Numidian rave to see
 His mistress lost? If ought could glad my soul,
 Beyond th' enjoyment of so bright a prize,
 'Twould be to torture that young, gay Barbarian.
 —But hark, what noise! death to my hopes! 'tis he,
 'Tis Juba's self! there is but one way left——
 He must be murder'd, and a passage cut
 Through those his guards—hah, dastards, do you
 tremble!

Or act like men, or by yon azure heaven——

Enter JUBA.

Jub. What do I see? Who's this that dares usurp
 The guards and habit of Numidia's prince?

Semp. One that was born to scourge thy arrogance,
 Presumptuous youth!

Jub. What can this mean? Sempronius!

Semp. My sword shall answer thee. Have at thy heart.

Jub. Nay, then beware thy own, proud barbarous
 man. [*Semp. falls. His guards surrender.*]

Semp. Curse on my stars! am I then doom'd to fall
 By a boy's hand, disfigur'd in a vile
 Numidian dress, and for a worthless woman?
 God's, I'm distracted! this is my close of life!
 O for a peal of thunder that would make
 Earth, sea, and air, and heav'n and Cato tremble! [*Dies.*]

Jub. With what a spring his furious soul broke loose,
 And

And left the limbs still quiv'ring on the ground!
Hence let us carry off those slaves to Cato,
That we may there at length unravel all
This dark design, this mystery of fate.

[Exit Juba with prisoners, &c.]

S C E N E III.

Enter LUCIA and MARCIA.

LUCIA.

SURE 'twas the clash of swords; my troubled heart
Is so cast down, and sunk amidst its sorrows,
It throbs with fear, and akes at every sound.
O Marcia, shou'd thy brothers for my sake! —
I die away with horror at the thought.

Mar. See, Lucia, see! here's blood! here's blood
and murder!

Hah! a Numidian! heav'ns preserve the prince;
The face lies muffled up within the garment,
But hah! death to my sight! a diadem,
And purple robes! O gods! 'tis he, 'tis he!
Juba, the loveliest youth that ever warm'd
A virgin's heart, Juba lies dead before us!

Luc. Now, Marcia, now call up to thy assistance
Thy wonted strength, and constancy of mind;
Thou can'st not put it to a greater trial.

Mar. Lucia, look there, and wonder at my patience,
Have I not cause to rave, and beat my breast,
To rend my heart with grief, and run distracted!

Luc. What can I think or say to give thee comfort?

Mar. Talk not of comfort, 'tis for lighter ills:
Behold a sight, that strikes all comfort dead.

Enter JUBA list'ning.

I will indulge my sorrows, and give way
To all the pangs and fury of despair,
That man, that best of men, deserv'd it from me.

Jub. What do I hear? And was the false Sempronius
That best of men? O had I fall'n like him,
And cou'd have thus been mourn'd, I had been happy.

Luc. Here will I stand, companion in thy woes.

And

And help thee with my tears; when I behold
A loss like thine, I half forgot my own.

Mar. 'Tis not in fate to ease my tortur'd breast.
This empty world, to me a joyless desert,
Has nothing left to make poor Marcia happy.

Jub. I'm on the rack! Was he so near her heart

Mar. O he was all made up of love and charms!
Whatever maid could wish, or man admire:
Delight of ev'ry eye! when he appear'd,
A secret pleasure gladd'ned all that saw him;
But when he talk'd, the proudest Roman blush'd
To hear his virtues, and old age grew wise.

Jub. I shall run mad ———

Mar. O Juba! Juba! Juba!

Jub. What means that voice? Did she not call on Juba.

Mar. Why do I think on what he was! he's dead!
He's dead, and never knew how much I lov'd him.
Lucia, who knows but his poor bleeding heart,
Amidst its agonies, remember'd Marcia,
And the last words he utter'd call'd me cruel;
Alas, he knew not, hapless youth, he knew not
Marcia's whole soul was full of love and Juba!

Jub. Where am I! do I live! or am indeed
What Marcia thinks! all is Elysium round me!

Mar. Ye dear remains of the most lov'd of men!
Nor modesty nor virtue here forbid
A last embrace, while thus ———

Jub. See Marcia, see [*Throwing himself before her.*
The happy Juba lives! he lives to catch
That dear embrace, and to return it too
With mutual warmth and eagerness of love.

Marc. With pleasure and amaze I stand transported?
Sure 'tis a dream! dead and alive at once!
If thou art Juba, who lies there?

Jub. A wretch.
Disguis'd like Juba on a curs'd design.
The tale is long, nor have I heard it out.
Thy father knows it all. I could not bear
To leave thee in the neighbourhood of death,
But flew, in all the haste of love to find thee;
I found thee weeping, and confess this once,

Am wrap'd with joy to see my Marcia's tears.

Mar. I've been surpriz'd in an unguarded hour,
But must not now go back : the love that lay
Half-smother'd in my breast, has broke through all
Its weak restraints, and burns in its full lustre.
I cannot, if I would, conceal it from thee.

Jub. I'm lost in ecstasy ; and dost thou love
Thou charming maid ?——

Mar. And dost thou live to ask it ?

Jub. This, this is life indeed ! life worth preserving,
Such life as Juba never felt till now !

Mar. Believe me, prince, before I thought thee dead,
I did not know myself how much I lov'd thee.

Jub. O fortunate mistake !

Mar. O happy Marcia !

Jub. My joy, my best beloved ! my only wish !
How shall I speak the transport of my soul ?

Mar. Lucia, thy arm ! O let me rest upon it !
The vital blood, that had forsook my heart,
Returns again in such tumultuous tides,
It quite o'ercomes me. Lead to my apartment.—
O prince ! I blush to think what I have said,
But fate has rested the confession from me ;
Go on, and prosper in the paths of honour.
Thy virtue will excuse my passion for thee,
And make the Gods propitious to our love.

Exeunt Mar. and Luc.

Jub. I am so blest, I fear 'tis all a dream.
Fortune, thou now hast made amends for all
Thy past unkindness, I absolve my stars.
What tho' Numidia add her conquer'd towns
And provinces to swell the victor's triumph ?
Juba will never at his fate repine :
Let Cæsar have the world, if Marcia's mine. [*Exit.*

S C E N E IV.

A March at a Distance.

Enter C A T O and L U C I U S.

L U C I U S.

I Stand astonish'd ! what, the bold Sempronius !
That still broke foremost thro' the crowd of patriots

E

As

As with a hurricane of zeal transported,
And virtuous ev'n to madness——

Cato. Trust me, Lucius,
Our civil discords have produc'd such crimes,
Such monstrous crimes, I am surpriz'd at nothing.
——O Lucius, I am sick of this bad world!
The day-light and the sun grow painful to me.

Enter PORTIUS.

But see where Portius comes! what means this haste?
Why are thy looks thus chang'd?

Por. My heart is griev'd,
I bring such news as will afflict my father.

Cato. Has Cæsar shed more Roman blood?

Por. Not so.

The traitor Syphax, as within the square
He exercis'd his troops, the signal given,
Flew off at once with his Numidian horse
To the South-gate, where Marcus holds the watch.
I saw and call'd to stop him but in vain,
He tost his arm aloft, and proudly told me,
He would not stay and perish like Sempronius.

Cato. Perfidious men! but haste my son, and see
Thy brother Marcus acts a Roman's part. [*Exit* Portius.
——Lucius the torrent bears too hard upon me:
Justice gives way to force; the conquer'd world
Is Cæsar's: Cato has no business in it.

Luc. While pride, oppression, and injustice reign,
The world will still demand her Cato's presence.
In pity to mankind, submit to Cæsar,
And reconcile thy mighty soul to life.

Cato. Would Lucius have me live to swell the
Of Cæsar's slaves, or by a base submission, [number
Give up the cause of Rome and own a tyrant?

Luc. The victor never will impose on Cato
Ungen'rous terms. His enemies confess
The virtues of humanity are Cæsar's.

Cato. Curse on his virtues! they've undone his
Such popular humanity is treason—— [country
But see young Juba! the good youth appears
Full of the guilt of his perfidious subjects.

Luc. Alas, poor prince! his fate deserves compas-
sion.

Enter

Enter JUBA.

Jub. I blush, and am confounded to appear
Before thy presence; *Cato.* What's thy Crime?

Jub. I'm a Numidian. *Cato.* And a brave one too.
Thou hast a Roman soul. *Jub.* Hast thou not heard
Of my false Countrymen? *Cato.* Alas, young prince,
Falshood and fraud shoot up in ev'ry soul,
The product of all climes—Rome has its Cæsars.

Jub. 'Tis generous thus to comfort the distress'd.

Cato. 'Tis just to give applause where 'tis deserv'd:
Thy virtue, prince, has stood the test of fortune,
Like purest gold; that, tortur'd in the furnace,
Comes out more bright, and brings forth all its weight.

Jub. What shall I answer thee? My ravish'd heart
O'erflows with secret joy: I'd rather gain
Thy praise, O Cato, than Numidia's empire.

Re-enter PORTIUS.

Por. Misfortune on misfortune! grief on grief!
My brother Marcus——

Cato. Hah! what has he done?
Has he forsook his post? Has he giv'n way?
Did he look tamely on, and let 'em pass?

Por. Scarce had I left my father, but I met him
Borne on the shields of his surviving soldiers,
Breathless and pale, and cover'd o'er with wounds.
Long, at the head of his few faithful friends,
He stood the shock of a whole host of foes,
'Till obstinately brave, and bent on death,
Opprest with multitudes, he greatly fell.

Cato. I'm satisfy'd.

Por. Nor did he fall before
His sword had pierc'd through the false heart of Syphax.
Yonder he lies. I saw the hoary traitor
Grin in the pangs of death, and bite the ground.

Cato. Thanks to the Gods! my boy has done his duty.
—Portius, when I am dead, be sure you place
His urn near mine.

Por. Long may they keep asunder!

Luc. O Cato, arm thy soul with all its patience;
See where the Corpse of thy dead son approaches!
The citizens and senators alarm'd,

Have gather'd round it, and attend it weeping.

C A T O meeting the Corpse.

Cato. Welcome, my son! here lay him down my
Full in my sight, that I may view at leisure [friends,
The bloody corpse, and count those glorious wounds.
—How beautiful is death, when earn'd by virtue!
Who would not be that youth? What pity is it
That we can die but once to serve our country!
—Why fits this sadness on your brows my friends?
I should have blush'd if Cato's house had stood
Secure, and flourish'd in a civil war.

—Portius, behold thy brother, and remember
Thy life is not thy own, when Rome demands it.

Jub. Was ever man like this! [*Aside.*

Cato. Alas, my friends!

Why mourn you thus! let not a private loss
Afflict your hearts. 'Tis Rome requires our tears.
The mistress of the world, the seat of empire,
The nurse of heroes, the delight of Gods,
That humbled the proud tyrants of the earth,
And set the nations free, Rome is no more.
O liberty! O virtue! O my country!

Jub. Behold that upright man! Rome fills his eyes
With tears, that flow'd not o'er his own dead son. [*Aside.*

Cato. Whate'er the Roman virtue has subdu'd,
The sun's whole course, the day and year are Cæsar's;
For him the self-devoted Decii dy'd,
The Fabii fell, and the great Scipios conquer'd:
Ev'n Pompey fought for Cæsar. Oh, my friends!
How is the toil of fate, the work of ages,
The Roman empire fall'n! O curst ambition!
Fall'n into Cæsar's hands! Our great forefathers
Had left him nought to conquer but his country.

Jub. While Cato lives Cæsar will blush to see
Mankind enslav'd, and be ashamed of empire.

Cato. Cæsar ashamed! has he not seen Pharsalia!

Luc. Cato, 'tis time thou save thyself and us.

Cato. Lose not a thought on me, I'm out of danger,
Heav'n will not leave me in the victor's hand.
Cæsar shall never say, I conquer'd Cato.
But oh, my friends, your safety fills my heart

With

With anxious thoughts: a thousand secret terrors
Rise in my soul: How shall I save my friends?
'Tis now, O Cæsar, I begin to fear thee.

Luc. Cæsar has mercy, if we ask it of him.

Cato. Then ask it, I conjure you! let him know
Whate'er was done against him, Cato did it.
Add, if you please, that I request it of him,
That I myself with tears request it of him,
The virtue of my friends may pass unpunish'd.
Juba, my heart is troubled for thy sake.
Shou'd I advise thee to regain Numidia,
Or seek the conqueror?—

Jub. If I forsake thee
Whilst I have life, may Heav'n abandon Juba!

Cato. Thy virtues, prince, If I foresee aright,
Will one day make thee great; at Rome hereafter,
'Twill be no crime to have been Cato's friend.
Portius, draw near! my son thou oft hast seen
Thy fire engag'd in a corrupted state,
Wrestling with vice and faction: now thou see'st me
Spent, overpow'r'd, despairing of success;
Let me advise thee to retreat betimes
To thy paternal seat, the Sabine field,
Where the great Censor toil'd with his own hands,
And all our frugal ancestors were bless'd
In humble virtues, and a rural life.
There live retired! pray for the peace of Rome,
Content thyself to be obscurely good.
When vice prevails, and impious men bear sway,
The post of honour is a private station.

Por. I hope my father does not recommend
A life to Portius, that he scorns himself.

Cato. Farewel, my friends! if there be any of you
Who dare not trust the victor's clemency,
Know there are ships prepar'd by my command,
(Their sails already op'ning to the winds)
That shall convey you to the wish'd-for port.
Is there aught else, my friends, I can do for you?
The conqueror draws near. Once more farewell!
If e'er we meet hereafter, we shall meet.

In happier climes, and on a safer shore,
Where Cæsar never shall approach us more.

[*Pointing to his dead son.*]

There the brave youth, with love of virtue fir'd.
Who greatly in his country's cause expir'd,
Shall know he conquer'd. The firm patriot there
(Who made the welfare of mankind his care)
Tho' still by faction, vice and fortune crost,
Shall find the gen'rous labour was not lost. [*Exeunt.*]



ACT V. SCENE I.

CATO solus, *sitting in a thoughtful posture: in his Hand Plato's Book on the Immortality of the soul.*

A drawn Sword on the Table by him.

IT must be so—— Plato, thou reason'st well——
Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
This longing after immortality?
Or whence this secret dread, and inward horror,
Of falling into nought? Why shrinks the soul
Back on herself, and startles at destruction?
'Tis the Divinity that stirs within us:
'Tis Heav'n itself that points out an hereafter,
And intimates eternity to man.
Eternity! thou pleasing, dreadful thought!
Through what variety of untry'd being,
Through what new scenes and changes must we pass!
The wide, th' unbounded prospect lies before me;
But shadows, clouds, and darkness rest upon it.
Here will I hold. If there's a power above us,
(And that there is all nature cries aloud
Through all her works) he must delight in virtue;
And that which he delights in, must be happy.
But when or where!—This world was made for Cæsar.
I'm weary of conjectures—This must end 'em.

[*Laying his Hand on his Sword.*]

Thus am I doubly arm'd: my death and life,
My bane and antidote are both before me:
This in a moment brings me to an end;

But

But this informs me I shall never die.
 The soul, secur'd in her existence, smiles
 At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.
 The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
 Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years,
 But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
 Unhurt amidst the war of elements,
 The wrecks of matter, and the crush of worlds.

What means this heaviness that hangs upon me?
 This lethargy that creeps through all my sense?
 Nature oppress'd, and harass'd out with care,
 Sinks down to rest. This once I'll favour her.
 That my awaken'd soul may take her flight,
 Renew'd in all her strength, and fresh with life,
 An off'ring fit for heav'n. Let guilt or fear
 Disturb man's rest: Cato knows neither of 'em,
 Indiff'rent in his choice to sleep or die.

S C E N E II.

C A T O, P O R T I U S.

C A T O.

BUT hah! how's this my son? why this intrusion?

Were not my orders that I would be private?

Why am I disobey'd? *Por.* Alas, my father!

What means this sword? this instrument of death?

Let me convey it hence! *Cato.* Rash youth, forbear!

Por. O let the pray'rs, th' intreaties of your friends,
 Their tears, their common danger, wrest it from you.

Cato. Wou'dst thou betray me? Wou'dst thou give
 A slave, a captive, into Cæsar's hands? [me up

Retire, and learn obedience to a father,

Or know, young man!

Por. Look not thus sternly on me;
 You know I'd rather die than disobey you.

Cato. 'Tis well! again I'm master of myself:

Now, Cæsar, let thy troops beset our gates

And bar each avenue, thy gath'ring fleets

O'erspread the sea, and stop up ev'ry port:

Cato shall open to himself a passage,

And mock thy hopes——

Por.

Por. O Sir, forgive your son,
Whose grief hangs heavy on him! O my father!
How am I sure it is not the last time
I e'er shall call you so! be not displeas'd,
O be not angry with me whilst I weep,
And, in the anguish of my heart, besech you
To quit the dreadful purpose of your soul!

Cato. Thou hast been ever good and dutiful.

[*Embracing him.*]

Weep not, my son, all will be well again,
The righteous gods, whom I have fought to please,
Will succour Cato, and preserve his children.

Por. Your words give comfort to my drooping heart.

Cato. Portius, thou may'st rely upon my conduct;
Thy father will not act what misbecomes him.
But go, my son, and see if aught be wanting
Among thy father's friends; see them embark'd;
And tell me if the winds and seas befriended them.
My soul is quite weigh'd down with care, and asks
The soft refreshment of a moment's sleep. [*Exit.*]

Por. My thoughts are more at ease, my heart revives.

S C E N E III.

PORTIUS, MARCIA.

P O R T I U S .

O Marcia, O my sister, still there's hope!
Our father will not cast away a life
So needful to us all, and to his country.
He is retired to rest, and seems to cherish
Thoughts full of peace. He has dispatched me hence
With orders, that bespeak a mind compos'd,
And studious for the safety of his friends.
Marcia, take care that none disturb his slumbers.

[*Exit.*]

Mar. O ye immortal powers, that guard the just,
Watch round his couch, and soften his repose,
Banish his sorrows, and becalm his soul
With easy dreams; remember all his virtues!
And shew mankind that goodness is your care.

S C E N E

S C E N E IV.

LUCIA, MARCIA.

LUCIA.

WHere is your father, Marcia, where is Cato?
Mar. Lucia, speak low, he is retir'd to rest.
 Lucia, I feel a gentle dawning hope
 Rise on my soul. We shall be happy still.

Luc. Alas I tremble when I think on Cato,
 In every view, in every thought I tremble!
 Cato is stern and awful as a God;
 He knows not how to wink at human frailty,
 Or pardon weakness, that he never felt.

Mar. Though stern and awful to the foes of Rome,
 He is all goodness, Lucia, always mild,
 Compassionate and gentle to his friends.
 Fill'd with domestic tenderness, the best,
 The kindest father I have ever found him,
 Easy and good, and bounteous to my wishes.

Luc. 'Tis his consent alone can make us blest'd.
 Marcia, we both are equally involv'd
 In the same intricate, perplex'd distress.
 The cruel hand of fate that has destroy'd
 Thy brother Marcus, whom we both lament,—

Mar. And ever shall lament, unhappy youth!

Luc. Has set my soul at large, and now I stand
 Loose of my vow. But who knows Cato's thoughts?
 Who knows how yet we may dispose of Portius,
 Or how he has determin'd of thyself?

Mar. Let him but live, commit the rest to Heav'n.

Enter LUCIUS.

Luc. Sweet are the slumbers of the virtuous man!
 O, Marcia, I have seen thy god-like father:
 Some power invisible supports his soul,
 And bears it up in all its wonted greatness.
 A kind refreshing sleep is fall'n upon him:
 I saw him stretch'd at ease, his fancy lost
 In pleasing dreams; as I drew near his couch,
 He smil'd, and cry'd, Cæsar, thou can'st not hurt me.

Mar. His mind still labors with some dreadful
 thought.

Luc. Lucia, why all this grief, these floods of sorrow?
 Dry

Dry up thy tears, my child, we all are safe
While Cato lives—His presence will protect us.

Enter JUBA.

Sub. Lucius, the horsemen are return'd from viewing
The number, strength, and posture of our foes,
Who now encamp within a short hour's march.
On the high point of yon bright western tower
We ken them from afar, the setting sun
Plays on their shining arms and burning helmets,
And covers all the field with gleams of fire.

Luc. Marcia, 'tis time we should awake thy father.
Cæsar is still disposed to give us terms,
And waits at distance till he hears from Cato.

Enter PORTIUS.

Portius, thy looks speak somewhat of importance.
What tidings dost thou bring? methinks I see
Unusual gladness sparkling in thy eyes.

Por. As I was hastening to the port, where now
My father's friends, impatient for a passage,
Accuse the ling'ring winds, a sail arrived
From Pompey's son, who through the realms of Spain
Calls out for vengeance on his father's death,
And rouses the whole nation up to arms.
Were Cato at their head, once more might Rome
Assert her rights, and claim her liberty.
But hark! what means that groan! O give me way,
And let me fly into my father's presence. [*Exit.*]

Luc. Cato, amidst his slumbers, thinks on Rome,
And in the wild disorder of his soul
Mourns o'er his country, hah! a second groan—
Heav'n guard us all—*Mar.* Alas, 'tis not the voice
Of one who sleeps! 'tis agonizing pain,
'Tis death is in that sound.—

Re-enter PORTIUS.

Por. O sight of woe!
O, Marcia, what we fear'd is come to pass!
Cato is fall'n upon his sword.—*Luc.* O Portius,
Hide all the horrors of thy mournful tale,
And let us guess the rest. *Por.* I've rais'd him up,
And plac'd him in his chair, where pale, and faint,
He gasps for breath, and as his life flows from him,
Demands

Demands to see his friends. His servants weeping,
Obsequious to his order, bear him hither.

[The back scene opens, and discovers Cato.

Mar. O Heav'n assist me in this dreadful hour,
To pay the last sad duties to my father.

Jub. These are thy triumphs, thy exploits, O Cæsar!

Luc. Now is Rome fall'n indeed!

[Cato brought forward in a chair.

Cato. Here set me down —

Portius, come near me—are my friends embark'd?

Can any thing be thought of for their service?

Whilst I yet live, let me not live in vain.

—O, Lucius, art thou here?—Thou art too good—

Let this our friendship live between our children,

Make Portius happy in thy daughter Lucia,

Alas, poor man, he weeps;—Marcia, my daughter—

O bend me forward!—Juba loves thee, Marcia.

A senator of Rome, while Rome surviv'd,

Wou'd not have match'd his daughter to a king,

But Cæsar's arms have thrown down all distinction;

Whoe'er is brave and virtuous, is a Roman—

—I'm sick to death—O when shall I get loose

From this vain world, th' abode of guilt and sorrow!—

—And yet methinks a beam of light breaks in

On my departing soul. Alas, I fear

I've been too hasty. O ye powers that search

The heart of man, and weigh his inmost thoughts,

If I have done amiss, impute it not—!

The best may err, but you are good, and—Oh! [Dies.

Luc. There fled the greatest soul that ever warm'd

A Roman breast; O, Cato! O, my friend!

Thy will shall be religiously observ'd.

But let us bear this awful corpse to Cæsar,

And lay it in his sight, that it may stand

A fence betwixt us and the victor's wrath:

Cato, tho' dead, shall still protect his friends.

From hence, let fierce contending nations know

What dire effects from civil discord flow,

'Tis this that shakes our country with alarms,

And gives up Rome a prey to Roman arms,

Produces fraud, and cruelty, and strife,

And robs the guilty world of Cato's life. [Exeunt omnes.

E P I.

EPILOGUE.

WHAT odd fantastick things we women do?

Who wou'd not listen when young lovers woo?

But die a maid, yet have the choice of two!

Ladies are often cruel to their cost:

To give you pain, themselves they punish most.

Vows of virginity should well be weigh'd;

Too oft they're cancell'd tho' in convents made.

Wou'd you revenge such rash resolves—you may

Be spiteful—and believe the thing we say,

We hate you when you're easily said nay.

How needless, if you know us, were your fears?

Let love have eyes, and beauty will have ears.

Our hearts are form'd as you yourselves would chuse,

Too proud to ask, too humble to refuse:

We give to merit, and to wealth we sell:

He sighs with most success that settles well:

The woes of wedlock with the joys we mix:

'Tis best repenting in a coach and six.

Blame not our conduct, since we but pursue

Those lively lessons we have learn'd from you,

Your breast no more the fire of beauty warms,

But wicked wealth usurps the pow'r of charms:

What pains to get the gaudy thing you hate,

To swell in show, and be a wretch in state.

At plays you ogle, at the ring, you borb;

Ev'n churches are no sanctuaries now:

There golden idols all your vows receive,

She is no goddess that has nought to give.

Oh, may once more the happy age appear,

When words were artless, and the thoughts sincere;

When gold and grandeur were unenvy'd things,

And courts less coveted than groves and springs.

Love then shall only mourn when truth complains,

And constancy feel transport in its chains.

Sighs with success their own soft anguish tell,

And eyes shall utter what the lips conceal:

Virtue again to its bright station climb,

And beauty fear no enemy but time;

The fair shall listen to desert alone,

And ev'ry Lucia find a Cato's son.

F I N I S.



